



Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)
Office of Outreach and Exporter Assistance (OOEA)

Vol. 4

February 2005



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Director's Column

OOEA continues to build and enhance partnerships to benefit trade. [Director Dale Miller explains:](#)

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Email export questions to FAS Trade Assistance and Promotion Office at: tapo@fas.usda.gov

Phone: (202) 720-7420

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STATEMENT

United States Department of Agriculture • Office of Communications • 1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250-1300 • Voice: (202) 720-4623 • Email: oc.news@usda.gov • Web: <http://www.usda.gov>

Release No. 0047.05

Contact:
USDA Press Office (202) 720-4623

Statement By Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns

February 9, 2005

"On Dec. 29, 2004, USDA released a final rule that establishes criteria for geographic regions to be recognized as presenting minimal risk of introducing BSE into the United States. It places Canada in the minimal-risk category, and defines the requirements that must be met for the import of certain ruminants and ruminant products from Canada. A minimal-risk region can include a region in which BSE-infected animals have been diagnosed, but where sufficient risk-mitigation measures have been put in place to make the introduction of BSE into the United States unlikely.

"Our ongoing investigations into the recent finds of BSE in Canada in animals over 30 months are not complete. Therefore, I feel it is prudent to delay the effective date for allowing imports of meat from animals 30 months and over.

"This action also addresses concerns over the portion of the minimal-risk rule that would reopen the Canadian border for beef from animals 30 months and over, while keeping it closed for imports of older live cattle for processing in the United States. Some have suggested that this part of the rule does not reflect the evidence that beef from animals 30 months and over processed in Canada has the same risk profile as beef from Canadian animals 30 months and over processed in the United States.

"At the same time, I am asking U.S. officials to move forward in consideration and development of a plan to allow imports of animals 30 months and older for slaughter as well as beef from over 30-month animals as the next step in resuming full trade with Canada. As always, decisions will be made based on the latest scientific information and with the protection of public and animal health the highest priority.

"We remain very confident that the combination of the rule's requirements, in addition to the animal and public health measures that Canada has in place to prevent the spread of BSE, along with the extensive U.S. regulatory food-safety and animal-health systems, provide the protection to U.S. consumers and livestock. The removal of Specified Risk Materials is the most effective barrier to protect consumers, and therefore the rest of the rule will proceed as announced."

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Release No. 0048.05

Contact:
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Secretary Mike Johanns, United States Department of Agriculture and Minister Andrew Mitchell, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada on February 9, 2005

"We were pleased today to have had an opportunity for our first meeting to get better acquainted personally and to discuss matters of mutual importance to agriculture in our two countries.

"Each country is the largest customer for the other's food and agriculture products. In addition, our farm economies and our markets are significantly integrated. Thus, it is important that we stay keenly aware of developments and issues that affect us both and be able to deal with them effectively.

"We enjoyed a candid discussion today. We discussed expanded cooperation in pursuit of a successful conclusion to the Doha negotiations, now entering a crucial phase. And, of course, we discussed BSE broadly and the path forward following the March 7 implementation of the Minimal Risk Rule to return to normal beef and cattle trade, while fully protecting our consuming public and our livestock herds. We agreed that cooperation between the United States and Canada to harmonize border and risk mitigation measures related to BSE will provide a model for the world on how to safely trade in animal and animal products while at the same time protecting both public and animal health.

"We discussed Secretary Johanns' decision to delay the effective date for allowing import of meat from animals 30 months of age and older. We discussed moving forward in an expeditious manner in the consideration and development of a plan to allow imports of animals 30 months of age and older for slaughter and meat from those animals as the next step in resuming full trade with Canada. We agreed that decisions will be made on the latest scientific information to assure that the protection of public and animal health remains the highest priority for both of our countries.

"We also discussed other issues affecting trade between our two countries and we both agree that a strong working relationship between us is critical to our farmers and ranchers and the economic health of our food industries. We see this first meeting as an important beginning, and we look forward to close cooperation in the future to further strengthen this beginning."

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Release No. 0042.05

Contact:
USDA Press Office (202) 720-4623

Statement by Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns Regarding Japanese Expert Panel Meeting - February 8, 2005

"I am pleased that Japanese technical experts met today and accepted the U.S. grading system as an appropriate means to determine the age of cattle. This action now resolves the outstanding technical issues on resuming our trade in beef.

"Export sales are very important to our cattle and beef industry, amounting to 10% of our total production. Sales to Japan alone exceeded \$1.7 billion in 2003 before trade was halted due to our finding one case of BSE in the United States.

"Today's determination by the Japanese experts is an important step towards resolving this issue between our two countries. We now call upon our Japanese colleagues to expedite the remaining implementation process so that trade may resume."

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Release No. 0038.05

Contact:
USDA Press Office (202) 720-4623

JOHANN'S OUTLINES PRESIDENT'S FY 2006 AGRICULTURE BUDGET

WASHINGTON, Feb. 7, 2005—Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns today released details of President Bush's FY 2006 U.S. Department of Agriculture budget, which meets the department's most important priorities, while exercising fiscal discipline to help meet the President's deficit reduction goals.

"The President's agriculture budget is fiscally responsible, ensures a strong safety net for farmers and ranchers and increases resources to help those in need," said Johanns. "The agriculture budget provides funds to protect America's food supply and agriculture systems, improve nutrition and health, conserve and enhance our natural resources and enhance economic opportunities for agricultural producers."

Total USDA outlays increased from about \$72 billion in 2004 to \$94.9 billion in 2005 and are projected to remain at roughly that level in 2006 at \$94.6 billion. The increase from 2004 to 2005 is largely due to higher Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) outlays for commodity programs (+\$13 billion) and domestic nutrition assistance (+\$7 billion).

The higher 2005 CCC outlays reflect higher loan deficiency and other crop payments due to lower crop prices and disaster payments. Outlays for CCC are estimated to decline by about \$5 billion between 2005, which included outlays from disaster supplemental funds and 2006. The higher domestic nutrition assistance outlays were primarily a result of a 10 percent increase in Food Stamp participation between 2004 and 2005.

Budget authority for USDA discretionary programs has been roughly \$22 billion in recent years. In 2005, this included about \$1 billion in emergency supplemental funds for forest fire suppression and in response to the hurricanes and other disasters. The 2006 budget proposes \$19.4 billion in budget authority for discretionary programs – down about \$2.6 billion from 2005. About \$1 billion of this saving is achieved from the one-time disaster funding in 2005, which is not continued in the 2006 budget.

Highlights of the FY 2006 include:

Commodity Credit Corporation. The 2005 CCC outlay estimate included about \$2.8 billion in disaster funding and projected increases in counter-cyclical, loan deficiency, and other payments due to the sharp decline in prices resulting from abundant production of major program crops. In 2006, total CCC outlays are projected to decline by about \$5 billion, in part

due to projected commodity-price recovery. Further, the proposal to reform farm support programs accounts for savings of about \$587 million in CCC outlays. Over a 10-year period, these reforms are expected to save nearly \$5.7 billion.

Elements of the proposed reforms include: lowering the payment limit cap for individuals to \$250,000 for commodity payments, including all types of marketing loan gains, as well as eliminating the three-entity-rule, basing marketing loans on historical production; reducing crop and dairy payments to farmers by 5 percent, requiring the dairy price-support program to minimize expenditures, and extending the Milk Income Loss Contract program for two years; and imposing a sugar marketing assessment to be paid by sugar processors on all processed sugar.

Crop Insurance. Net outlays for crop insurance have grown nearly 50 percent between 2001 and 2006 with the implementation of the crop insurance reforms of 2000. At the same time, producers have continued to receive disaster payments through ad hoc disaster programs. The budget includes proposals to enhance crop insurance coverage, and reduce costs to deliver the program, so that crop insurance will provide coverage that is sufficient to sustain most farmers in times of loss.

Proposals include a higher minimum coverage level, tying the receipt of direct payments to purchase of crop insurance and changes in fees, premium rates and delivery expenses. The combination of changes being proposed is expected to save approximately \$140 million per year beginning in 2007. This change should ensure that farmers of major commodity crops have crop insurance with a minimum coverage level that is sufficient to sustain most farmers in times of loss.

Domestic Nutrition Assistance Participation and Funding. Participation levels in the Department's three major nutrition assistance programs – Women, Infants and Children (WIC), Food Stamps and School Lunch – show continued increases from 2004 to 2006. The budget fully funds the expected requirements for these programs.

WIC participation continues to grow to new record levels, with an increase of more than 3 percent above the 2005 estimate to a projected 8.5 million participants. The budget proposes \$5.6 billion to support this level and includes a \$125 million contingency fund, should costs increase beyond current estimates.

Food Stamp participation increases about 10 percent each year, on top of a 12 percent increase in 2004 over the actual 2003 level. The budget includes resources to fully fund estimated Food Stamp participation and also provides a \$3 billion contingency fund should actual costs exceed the estimated level.

School Lunch participation is estimated to reach 29.8 million children each day.

USDA programs also continue to help feed those in need around the world. The President's budget proposes \$100 million for the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program, an increase of 15 percent over 2005. This funding level will support nutrition assistance for 2.6 million women and children, up from 2.2 million in 2005.

Farm Bill Conservation Program Funding and Program Enrollment. The budget proposes \$3.8 billion to continue implementation of the conservation programs authorized in the 2002 Farm Bill. In dollar terms, the largest of these programs is the Conservation Reserve Program,

estimated at \$2 billion in 2006, more than one-half of the total. Also, within that total, \$72 million in additional resources are provided to extend the Conservation Security Program, into about 200 additional watersheds in 2006. Funding in the budget will support enrollment of an additional 25 million acres in conservation programs, largely in EQIP.

Food and Agriculture Defense Initiative. The budget proposes \$376 million in USDA funding for the multi-agency Food and Agriculture Defense Initiative, which is funded at nearly \$600 million government-wide. This initiative began in 2004. Under USDA's contribution, the budget proposes \$317 million for programs, and \$59 million to complete construction of the National Centers for Animal Health in Ames, Iowa. Funding for programs reflects a \$140 million increase above 2005, including: \$37 million in increases to strengthen the Food Emergency Response Network and the Regional Diagnostic Network to ensure the capacity to respond quickly to food emergencies and plant and animal diseases; \$35 million in increases for research to develop the means to quickly identify pathogens, develop improved vaccines and better understand the genes that provide disease resistance; and \$51 million in funds to enhance surveillance and monitoring activities to quickly detect pest and disease threats.

Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) Activities. After the discovery Dec. 23, 2003, of a single cow with BSE in the United States, a one-time, enhanced BSE surveillance program was implemented, beginning in June 2004. Funds were also provided in 2004 to begin to implement a National Animal Identification System. The 2006 budget proposes funding for continued testing and implementation of the National Animal Identification System.

In addition, the budget provides an increase of \$7.5 million for an enhanced BSE research program. The additional research funding is directed to increasing our scientific understanding of the disease and developing the technology needed by regulatory agencies to establish science-based policies and control programs.

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Release No. 0036.05

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BUSH ADMINISTRATION PROPOSES INCREASED FUNDING FOR FY 2006 TO MAINTAIN AND RESTORE FOREST AND RANGELAND HEALTH

Healthy Forest Projects Would Continue to Reduce Wildfire Threat

WASHINGTON, Feb. 3, 2005—Agriculture Under Secretary Mark Rey and Interior Assistant Secretary Lynn Scarlett today announced that President Bush is including more than \$867 million in the fiscal year 2006 budget to continue implementation of his Healthy Forests Initiative.

"This significant budget increase, along with the new tools afforded under the Healthy Forests Restoration Act, would allow federal land management agencies to continue to improve the health of millions of acres in our forests and rangelands," said Agriculture Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment Mark Rey. "The President's budget provides funding to advance our long-term restoration strategy of treating the right acres, in the right place and at the right time."

"Over the past four years, Interior agencies and the Forest Service have forged strong partnerships with States, Tribes, communities, and citizens to thin vegetation on over 11 million acres of forests and rangelands," said Assistant Secretary of the Interior Lynn Scarlett. "In 2004 alone, we removed hazardous fuels from 1.8 million acres of lands adjacent to communities, a 130 percent increase in acres treated in the wildland urban interface as part of the National Fire Plan compared with 2001."

The President's budget request funds activities that advance the goals of the Healthy Forests Initiative, including activities authorized under the Healthy Forests Restoration Act that will result in improved forest and rangeland management, healthier landscapes, and reduced risk of catastrophic wildfires.

The \$867 million budget proposal, more than a \$56 million increase over FY 2005, takes an integrated approach to reducing hazardous fuels and restoring forest and rangeland health. The fuels reduction program will be integrated with programs that support wildlife habitat improvements, watershed enhancements, vegetation management, stewardship timber harvest and forest health research to achieve more comprehensive and effective results in our forests

and rangelands.

The Healthy Forests Initiative FY 2006 budget will reduce hazardous fuel loads and insect infestation on nearly 4.3 million acres, up from 1.2 million acres in 2000. More than 50 percent of the 2006 acres will be in the wildland-urban interface. By the end of FY 2006, federal agencies will have removed hazardous fuels from more than 19 million acres of our nation's forests and rangelands since the beginning of FY 2001.

President Bush introduced the Healthy Forests Initiative in August 2002 during one of the most destructive wildfire seasons in 50 years. The President later signed the Healthy Forests Restoration Act on Dec. 3, 2003, which streamlines the administrative procedures and appeals process and provides Federal courts direction when reviewing fuel reduction or forest health projects. Additional information on the Healthy Forest Initiative is available at <http://www.healthyforests.gov>.

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Release No. 0040.05

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SIGN-UP BEGINS FEBRUARY 7 FOR TREE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Feb. 7, 2005 -- Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns today announced that sign-up begins Feb. 7, 2005, for the Tree Assistance Program (TAP), which provides financial relief to owners of eligible trees, bushes, vines and forest land damaged by natural disasters. Funding for TAP was authorized by the Military Construction and Emergency Hurricane Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2005 (2005 Appropriations Act), and signed into law by President Bush last October.

"This legislation," said Johanns, "provides more than \$3 billion in relief to farmers, ranchers, foresters and other agricultural producers who suffered damage due to severe weather in recent years."

TAP for Orchardists

Funding as necessary has been authorized for benefits under the 2005 Appropriations Act for losses which occurred during the period beginning Dec. 1, 2003, and ending Dec. 31, 2004, for eligible orchardists to replant trees, bushes and vines that were grown to produce an annual crop. Benefits will not be prorated.

TAP for Forest Timber Producers

In addition, the 2005 Appropriations Act authorized \$15 million for assistance to eligible producers who meet all requirements and produce periodic crops of forest timber for commercial use, and who suffered timber losses or damage during the period beginning Dec. 1, 2003, and ending Dec. 31, 2004. If all eligible claims filed during the application period are greater than the available funds, benefits will be prorated.

TAP for Pecan Tree Producers

The 2005 Appropriations Act also authorized \$8.5 million in TAP assistance for producers who suffered crop damage to pecan trees. The funds will reimburse producers for pruning, rehabilitation and other related costs. Pecan producers must be located in a Presidentially-declared disaster county that suffered hurricane or tropical storm-related tree losses related to the 2004 hurricane season. If all eligible claims filed during the application period are greater

than the available funds, benefits will be prorated.

For more information, or to apply for TAP assistance, tree owners should contact their local Farm Service Agency (FSA) office. Additional TAP information is available on FSA's Web site at: www.fsa.usda.gov.

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USDA Launches New Animal ID Website

Amy Spillman (301) 734-7253

Jerry Redding (202) 720-6959

USDA LAUNCHES WEB SITE FOCUSING ON THE NATIONAL ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM

WASHINGTON, Jan. 25, 2005-The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service today announced the launch of a new Web site to inform stakeholders about the national animal identification system (NAIS). The Web site, available at <http://www.usda.gov/nais>, is designed to be a one-stop resource to facts about NAIS.

"We hope our stakeholders will visit the site frequently to find out the latest news about the NAIS from a national perspective," said APHIS Administrator W. Ron DeHaven. "It will be updated regularly as new information becomes available."

In addition to providing national news, the site provides contact information for state and tribal animal health authorities. The states and tribes are responsible for providing each premises under their purview with a nationally unique identification number-the starting point of the NAIS. All states should be able to assign nationally unique premises identification numbers to locations where animals are managed or held by mid-2005.

Over time, APHIS plans to add to the new Web site resources targeted to specific species and industry-segment groups. Currently, NAIS working groups comprised of industry and government representatives have been established for cattle and bison, sheep, swine, poultry, horses, llamas and alpacas, deer and elk, and livestock markets and processors.

In implementing the NAIS, USDA's goal is to provide animal health officials the ability to identify all animals and premises that have had contact with a foreign or domestic animal disease of concern within 48 hours after discovery. As an information system that provides for rapid tracing of infected and exposed animals during an outbreak situation, the NAIS will help limit the scope of such outbreaks and ensure that they are contained and eradicated as quickly as possible.

With the recent passage of the Fiscal Year 2005 Consolidated Appropriations Act, APHIS will receive approximately \$33 million for NAIS implementation. USDA also transferred \$18.8 million from its Commodity Credit Corporation to APHIS during fiscal year 2004 to support the NAIS.

Note to Reporters: USDA news releases, program announcements and media advisories are available on the Internet. Go to the APHIS home page at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov> and click on the "News" button. Also, anyone with an e-mail address can sign up to receive APHIS press releases automatically. Send an e-mail message to lyris@mdrdlyriss10.aphis.usda.gov and leave the subject blank. In the message, type subscribe press_releases.



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Release No.0033.04

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USDA ANNOUNCES 2005-CROP LOAN RATES FOR CORN, GRAIN SORGHUM AND SOYBEANS

WASHINGTON, Jan. 31, 2005 - Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns today announced 2005-crop corn, grain sorghum, and soybean national and county loan rates.

"This is the earliest we have announced marketing assistance county loan rates for these commodities," Johanns said. "This exemplifies our commitment to providing timely information to enable producers to better utilize these programs in their planting and marketing decisions."

Determining County Loan Rates

After enactment of the 2002 Farm Bill, USDA announced the most comprehensive adjustments in more than 15 years to the county loan rate structure beginning with the 2002 crops. Because adjustments in county loan rates had not been made for grains for several years, numerous disparities between loan rates and market prices had emerged, which affected producer benefits. The restructured rates were intended to more clearly reflect market factors affecting each crop and minimize distortions that work to the detriment of producers and industry.

The 2005-crop county loan rates announced today continue these incremental adjustments. The relative levels of the county loan rates for each commodity reflect the most recent information available about price relationships around the country and will enhance the market orientation of the corn, grain sorghum, and soybean loan and loan deficiency payment programs.

Corn, Grain Sorghum and Soybean County Loan Rates Updated

In establishing the 2005-crop rates, USDA paid special attention to reducing notable loan rate differences among neighboring counties that are not the result of current market forces. These updated county loan rates reflect changes that have occurred in cropping and marketing patterns over the years.

2005-Crop Corn, Grain Sorghum and Soybean National Loan Rates

The 2002 Farm Bill establishes the 2005-crop national average loan rates at the following levels:

Corn
\$1.95 per bushel

Grain Sorghum
\$1.95 per bushel

Soybeans
\$5.00 per bushel

Other 2005 Crops

The 2005-crop loan rates for wheat, barley, oats and other oilseeds were previously announced on Dec. 2, 2004. The 2005-crop loan rates for pulse crops will be announced in early 2005.

Accessing 2005-Crop County Loan Rates

The 2005-crop county loan rates for corn, grain sorghum and soybeans will be available on the Farm Service Agency Web site within four business days of this announcement. The Web site is located at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/dafp/psd/LoanRate.htm>. County loan rates for wheat, barley, oats and other oilseeds are also available on this site.

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USDA News
oc.news@usda.gov
202 720-4623

USDA Amends Long-Horned Beetle Quarantine

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USDA AMENDS NEW JERSEY ASIAN LONGHORNED BEETLE QUARANTINE AREAS

WASHINGTON, Jan. 27, 2005-The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service today announced it is amending existing Asian longhorned beetle (ALB) quarantine boundaries in New Jersey.

Intensive surveys have confirmed infestations of ALB in the Borough of Carteret and in the Avenel section of Woodbridge Township in Middlesex County, and in the cities of Rahway and Linden in Union County, prompting the need to enact a 12.1-square-mile quarantine to include these areas. This action is necessary as APHIS remains vigilant in its effort to prevent the spread of this destructive pest to non-infested areas of the United States, and to increase public awareness to the dangers of transporting articles regulated for ALB.

The newly established quarantine is approximately 20 miles south of the 3.7-square-mile ALB quarantine established in October 2002 in Jersey City, N.J.

Regulated articles include firewood (all hardwood species), green lumber and other wood materials living, dead, cut or fallen, including nursery stock, logs, stumps, roots, branches and debris of half an inch or more in diameter, from the following: maple, horsechestnut, birch, poplar, willow, elm, ash, mimosa (silk tree), hackberry, sycamore, mountain ash and London plane. APHIS requires that regulated articles moved outside the quarantine area meet certain conditions and be accompanied by an APHIS-issued certificate or a limited permit. Extreme caution should be taken to assure unintentional transport of the beetle does not occur.

The ALB, native to China, Korea and Japan, bores into healthy hardwood trees and feeds on living tree tissue during the larval stage. Later, throughout the summer, adult beetles emerge from exit holes and briefly feed on the leaves and small twigs of host trees.

ALB infestations are responsible for the destruction of more than 10,000 trees in the New York, New Jersey and Illinois quarantined areas.

Since its initial discovery in New York in 1996, Illinois in 1998 and New Jersey in 2002, tree destruction had been the only method for controlling this beetle. APHIS and its cooperators undertake eradication by imposing quarantines, conducting intensified visual inspections around confirmed sites to delimit infestations, remove infested and high risk exposed host trees, and chemically treat host trees as part of an area-wide integrated pest management strategy. The goal is to eliminate this destructive insect from New York, New Jersey and Illinois before it can establish itself elsewhere.

The ALB Cooperative Eradication Program relies on the public's support and help in eliminating this destructive pest from the United States. The public can assist by not removing any regulated articles out of the quarantine areas in New York, Illinois and New Jersey. Residents can also help by looking for the ALB and reporting any sightings. To report a sighting of ALB, please call toll free (866) 233-8531 in New Jersey; (866) 265-0301 in New York; (800) 641-3934 in Illinois.

APHIS, USDA's Forest Service, New Jersey Department of Agriculture and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection participate in the ALB Cooperative Eradication Program. For more information, visit the APHIS Web site at www.aphis.usda.gov/alb.

This interim rule was effective Jan. 24 and is scheduled for publication in the Jan. 28 *Federal Register*. APHIS documents published in the *Federal Register* and related information, including the names of organizations and individuals who have commented on APHIS dockets, are available on the Internet at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppd/rad/webrepor.html>.

Consideration will be given to comments received on or before March 29.

Comments can be submitted by postal mail, commercial delivery or by e-mail.

Send an original and three copies of postal mail or commercial delivery

comments to Docket No. 04-130-1, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Station 3C71, 4700 River Road, Unit 118, Riverdale, Md. 20737-1238 or e-mail your comments to regulations@aphis.usda.gov.

E-mail comments must be contained in the body of the message; do not send attached files. Please include your name and address in your message and type "Docket No. 04-130-1 on the subject line. To submit comments online, go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and follow the instructions for locating this docket and submitting comments.

Comments can be reviewed at USDA, Room 1141, South Building, 14th St. and Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. To facilitate entry into the comment reading room, please call (202) 690-2817 .

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Florida Department of Agriculture
and Consumer Services



Charles H. Bronson, Commissioner

*Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Department Press Release*

01-28-2005

Denise Feiber
(352) 372-3505 x102
(352) 235-0036 cell

Citrus Canker Found In New Areas

TALLAHASSEE – The Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services announced today the identification of citrus canker in Sebastian, Indian River County and in a citrus grove located in Ft. Pierce, St. Lucie County.

During a routine Sentinel Tree Survey conducted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture on January 25, 2005, three citrus trees suspected of having citrus canker were found on two adjacent properties in Sebastian. The canker diagnosis was confirmed by state pathologists on January 26, 2005. Also during a routine grove survey conducted by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services on January 26, 2005, 38 citrus trees suspected of having citrus canker were found in three blocks of grapefruit in Ft. Pierce. Plant pathologists confirmed the diagnosis January 27, 2005. State Citrus Canker Eradication Program personnel immediately launched a comprehensive survey of both these areas to identify the extent of the infection and to prevent the disease from spreading further.

Citrus canker spreads primarily by wind-driven rain and by people moving infected citrus plant material and/or infected gardening-related tools. Movement of infected citrus plant material out of South Florida has been linked to the spread of canker to uninfected areas. The 2004 hurricanes have caused outbreaks of citrus canker in other Florida counties and eradication programs to address these outlying infections are underway.

Department personnel will continue inspecting properties surrounding the positive finds in Sebastian and Ft. Pierce until all positive trees have been identified. This should be accomplished within the next few weeks. The Citrus Canker Eradication law requires the removal of all exposed citrus trees within 1,900 ft. of an infected tree. Removal of positive and exposed trees is underway.

The state and the USDA are working with area homeowner associations to distribute information about citrus canker and eradication program procedures. A public information session will be held in February in Sebastian on a yet-to-be determined date. Residents will be able to view maps showing the locations of the positive trees and the associated 1,900-ft. exposure zones. Scientists will also attend the meeting to answer questions about the science behind the eradication effort and the impact of the disease. Until the completed survey determines the extent of the infection, the state is asking for the cooperation of residents in these areas to help stop the further spread of the disease. Residents can help in the following ways:

- Do not move citrus off your property.
 - Do not give citrus to your friends or neighbors.
 - Do not ship citrus.
 - Do not prune or clip citrus.
 - Do not plant citrus trees.
 - If you come into contact with the citrus in your yard, decontaminate with any household disinfectant that is safe for personal use.
 - Do not dispose of citrus tree clippings or fruit remains. If you have remains that must be disposed of, double bag them for disposal with your household garbage, not your yard trash.
 - People who suspect their trees may have citrus canker are asked to contact the citrus canker toll-free helpline at 800-282-5153 and an inspector will be sent to check the trees. Additional information about citrus canker quarantine zones and decontamination procedures is available on the Department's Web site at www.doacs.state.fl.us/canker.
-

USDA Export Assistance Applications

USDA INVITES APPLICATIONS FOR EXPORT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Donald Washington (202) 720-3101
Washington@fas.usda.gov

WASHINGTON, Feb. 13, 2001—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced that it will accept applications for four export market development programs until March 12. The programs are the fiscal year 2001 Emerging Markets Program (EMP), Market Access Program (MAP), Quality Samples Program (QSP), and the FY 2002 Foreign Market Development Program (FMD).

USDA also announced that it will accept applications for the Section 108 program on a continuing basis. Applications for Section 108 will be reviewed quarterly.

All of the programs are designed to help expand commercial export markets for U.S. agricultural commodities and are administered by USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service. Applications for participation in these programs are due by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, March 12, 2001.

The purpose of the EMP is to assist U.S. public and private organizations in improving market opportunities for U.S. agricultural products in low- to middle-income countries. The program focuses on expanding market access opportunities where there are risks that the private sector would not normally undertake alone.

Working through U.S. trade organizations and small-sized entities, the MAP is designed to create, expand, and maintain foreign markets for the U.S. agricultural commodities through cost-share assistance. MAP participants share in the cost of overseas marketing and promotion activities.

The QSP helps U.S. exporters provide samples of American commodities to foreign buyers who have not previously used them, as a means to encourage new purchases. The program supports projects that benefit whole industries rather than individual companies. When a project is finished, USDA reimburses the costs for procuring and exporting the samples.

The FMD program can provide funds to assist nonprofit U.S. agricultural trade organizations in developing and maintaining foreign markets for U.S. agricultural products through a cost-share program. FMD funds are allocated to U.S. trade organizations with the broadest possible producer representation. Priority is given to those organizations that are nationwide in membership and scope. Activities must contribute to the maintenance or growth of demand for the agricultural commodities and generally address long-term foreign import constraints and export growth opportunities.

Section 108 provides cost-share assistance in the form of foreign currencies to the private sector for the development, maintenance, and expansion of long-term export markets for U.S. agricultural products and agricultural technical assistance in foreign countries.

Applicants are encouraged to apply through the Internet. To do so, contact the FAS Marketing Operations Staff by calling (202) 720-4327 for a log-on ID and a password. The web-based application is located on the Internet at <http://www.fas.usda.gov/mos/ues/unified.html>

Applicants can also submit a single application for all of the export assistance programs, including the MAP and FMD, under the Unified Export Strategy (UES). Using UES, constituents can consolidate their market development proposals into one strategically coordinated proposal for all of the programs.

Applications can be **hand-delivered to**: USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service, Marketing Operations Staff, Room 4932-S, 1400 Independence Ave. S.W., Washington, DC 20250-1042; **mailed to**: USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service, Marketing Operations Staff, Stop 1042, 1400 Independence Ave. S.W., Washington, DC 20250-1042; or **sent electronically to**: mosadmin@fas.usda.gov.

*#General information about FAS programs, resources, and services is available on the Internet.
The address (URL) for the FAS home page is: <http://www.fas.usda.gov>*

PR 0050-01



DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

As we roll out our 4th Edition of **OUTREACH NOTES**, we remain committed to creating awareness about the importance of agricultural exports and availability of related export programs and services. In this column, I will focus on our Web site (www.fas.usda.gov) noting that FAS works to improve market access for U.S. products, build new markets, improve the competitive position of American agriculture and provide food aid and technical assistance to countries around the world. In short, FAS works to bring global market opportunities home.

Our Web page is entitled *FASonline* and provides detailed information on “Doing Business with FAS,” exporter assistance, export programs, trade data, trade policy, country and commodity data and more. Currently, *FAS Online* features reports on “Consumer-Driven Changes in Global Food Supply Chains” and “Examining Global Food Trade Patterns and How WTO Market Access Rules Shape Trade.” Of particular interest to agricultural product exporters is the myriad of USDA export assistance programs and services ranging from the Market Access Program (MAP) to lists of foreign buyers.

The FAS Directory section pinpoints contacts for information on biotechnology, commodity analysis, trade agreements and food aid for example. The Upcoming Events section highlights important domestic and international trade shows, conferences and related events. FAS works hard to make sure new-to-export and established exporters alike get the assistance and information they need to be successful.

This month, I am highlighting three different outreach partners in hopes you will visit their Web sites to learn more about their mission, and role to support trade education and exports.

Association of Small Business Development Centers (www.asbdc.org)
National Association of Ag Educators (www.naae.org)
State Regional Trade Groups

(www.foodexortusa.org (East))

(www.miatco.org (Midwest))

(www.susta.org (South))

(www.wusata.org (West))

The “S” in FAS stands for “Service” and we would like a chance to prove that to you. Please take a look at our Web site (www.fas.usda.gov) and/or call our Trade Assistance and Promotion Office for exporter assistance @ (202) 720-7420. We look forward to hearing from you on how we can better serve you.

Thanks for reading!

Sincerely,

Dale Miller

Director,
FAS Office of Outreach & Exporter Assistance

Unsubscribe Newsletter

To unsubscribe to “Outreach Notes” or to change your email address contact USDA-FAS, the Office of Outreach and Exporter Assistance by sending a short email to the Editor of “Outreach Notes” at outreach@fas.usda.gov.

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NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Office of Communications • 1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250-1300 • Voice: (202) 720-4623 • Email: oc.news@usda.gov • Web: <http://www.usda.gov>

Release No. 0035.05

Susan Acker (703) 305-2286
Angela Harless (202) 720-4623

USDA AWARDS \$15 MILLION TO STATES AND TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR THE SENIOR FARMERS' MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Feb. 1, 2005 - Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns today announced fiscal year 2005 Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) grant awards to 47 state agencies and tribal organizations to provide low-income seniors with coupons that can be exchanged for fresh produce at farmers' markets, roadside stands and community-supported agriculture programs.

"These grants will provide low-income seniors the opportunity to enrich their diets with highly nutritious fresh fruits and vegetables," said Johanns. "Local farmers benefit from the program as well by attracting more customers to their markets for farm fresh products."

The 2002 Farm Bill authorizes and provides \$15 million annually to operate the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program for fiscal years 2003 through 2007. All 47 grantees that operated this program in FY 2004 will continue to operate the program during the 2005 season.

The Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program provides fresh, locally grown fruits, vegetables and herbs to low-income seniors, as well as increases the consumption of agricultural commodities. Through this increased consumption, the SFMNP will help expand or develop farmers' markets and other agricultural commodity outlets.

These grants are expected to serve over 800,000 low-income senior citizens nationwide, an increase from FY 2004. Coupons to purchase fresh produce this year will be accepted by over 13,000 farmers at nearly 4,000 markets, roadside stands or community-supported agriculture programs. The grantees are: Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program FY 2005 Grants

STATE AGENCY

AWARD

Alabama	\$897,796
Alaska	\$63,293
Arkansas	\$86,489
California	\$604,603
Chickasaw Nation, OK	\$130,041

Choctaw Indians, MS	\$13,660
Colorado	\$13,467
Connecticut	\$81,832
District of Columbia	\$127,841
Five Sandoval, NM	\$17,956
Florida	\$86,706
Grand Traverse, MI	\$7,805
Hawaii	\$516,454
Illinois	\$697,762
Indiana	\$36,304
Iowa	\$502,766
Kansas	\$175,986
Kentucky	\$248,063
Louisiana	\$251,009
Maine	\$801,665
Maryland	\$102,894
Massachusetts	\$51,085
Michigan	\$67,335
Minnesota	\$89,579
Mississippi	\$62,846
Missouri	\$214,473
Montana	\$38,886
Nebraska	\$225,461
Nevada	\$127,109
New Hampshire	\$68,003
New Jersey	\$613,293
New York	\$1,345,846
North Carolina	\$39,739
Ohio	\$1,175,262
Oregon	\$693,255
Osage, OK	\$27,537
Pennsylvania	\$1,346,694
Pueblo of San Felipe, NM	\$14,868
Puerto Rico	\$844,540
Rhode Island	\$178,258
South Carolina	\$583,567
Tennessee	\$453,055
Vermont	\$78,370
Virginia	\$378,549
Washington	\$111,075
West Virginia	\$461,597
Wisconsin	\$245,326
Total	\$15,000,000

Additional information about the SFMNP is available at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns>.

#

**USDA Newsoc.news@usda.gov
202 720-4623**

News Release

Texas Animal Health Commission

Box 12966 * Austin, Texas 78711 * (800) 550-8242 * FAX (512) 719-0719

Bob Hillman, DVM * Executive Director

For info, contact Carla Everett, information officer, at 1-800-550-8242, ext. 710,
or ceverett@tahc.state.tx.us

For immediate release---

Resolve to Protect Livestock & Poultry Health!

A few weeks into 2005, and many of us already have broken—or at least, bent—those vows to exercise or skip dessert. To salvage our resolutions, Texas state veterinarian Bob Hillman offers an alternative list for livestock and poultry producers that can be adopted anytime:

- 1. Fence out disease**
- 2. Never settle for “almost” in disease eradication**
- 3. Volunteer your herd for a cattle tuberculosis (TB) test**
- 4. Control flies and ticks**
- 5. Maintain a good relationship with your private veterinary practitioner**
- 6. Don’t stall; call to report unusual signs of disease or pests in livestock**
- 7. Register for a new “address”**

“Herd and flock health can be enhanced, usually easier—and more successfully--than trying to lose a few pounds,” said Dr. Hillman, head of the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC), the state’s livestock and poultry health regulatory agency. “Disease prevention is cheaper and more beneficial than disease eradication, and even though exotic and foreign animal diseases get the biggest headlines, domestic disease outbreaks also can wreak havoc for producers. Outbreaks result in quarantines, widespread testing requirements and loss of credibility and marketing opportunities for our livestock and livestock products. One way to protect your herd or flock: fence out disease.”

“Now, more than ever, it’s important to maintain barriers to keep feral—or wild—swine out of domestic swine pens. From experience, we know many feral hogs carry and can transmit pseudorabies, a flu-like viral swine disease that can kill piglets and make older swine sick,” said Dr. Hillman. “In late 2004, after years of eradication efforts, the country’s commercial swine herds were declared free of pseudorabies. If feral swine spread disease to commercial swine, it would jeopardize our free status and our ability to ship swine without tests or restrictions.”

Dr. Hillman said the 12 governor-appointed TAHC commissioners have proposed changes to Texas swine regulations to comply with updated U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) rules. The proposals include redefining swine as being in one of three types of herds: “feral,” or wild swine; “transitional herds” at risk of being exposed to feral or captured feral swine; and “commercial herds,” that are continuously managed and in facilities that protect against commingling with wild swine. In 2004, for instance, eight transitional swine herds in the U.S. contracted the disease from wild swine. The proposals also would require breeding swine sold or sent to slaughter to be identified to the farm or origin, and sexually intact swine six months or older would have blood samples collected for pseudorabies and swine brucellosis testing whenever they pass through a livestock market.

“Swine brucellosis is another disease present in feral swine that can be spread to commercial swine herds,” remarked Dr. Hillman. “Although we have no current infection, Texas is the only state that does not have the swine brucellosis-free designation. It is extremely important that we also finish this swine disease eradication program to maintain our credibility with our trading partners.”

“One infected herd or flock makes all the difference between ‘close’ and finished, and disease can be reintroduced, or spread silently,” said Dr. Hillman. “All states are free of cattle brucellosis, except Texas and Wyoming. While we have never been gained ‘free’ status for cattle brucellosis eradication, Wyoming held this coveted ranking for nearly 20 years before two infected cattle herds were detected adjacent to a feeding ground for free-ranging elk. Many elk on the feeding ground also were infected,

leading epidemiologists to believe the elk spread the disease; another reason to keep wildlife apart from livestock.”

“In the 1950s, cattle brucellosis affected more than 20,000 Texas herds, causing cows to abort, deliver weak calves and produce less milk. In recent years, we see few signs of the disease, and oftentimes, only one or two infected animals are detected within a herd. However, the disease is still present in Texas. In early January 2005, a cattle herd north of Jacksboro, in Clay County, was found to be infected with brucellosis. This was only four months after an infected herd was found in Leon County. So, what can you do to protect your cattle?”

“Consider having your heifers vaccinated with the RB-51 vaccine, which provides cows with lifelong protection against brucellosis but doesn’t create confusion on blood tests,” he suggested. “At the livestock market, breeding cattle 18 months or older are routinely tested for brucellosis; remember that this requirement also extends to private treaty sales, unless cattle originate from a certified, brucellosis-free herd that’s tested yearly. Hauling new cattle home? Isolate them or 30 days and consider having them retested for brucellosis prior to joining the herd.”

“Herd tests assure owners—and our trading partners--that disease hasn’t been introduced or hasn’t spread among herds,” he said. “Right now, 2,000 beef herd owners need to volunteer their animals for a cattle tuberculosis (TB) test, to help the state regain its TB-free status, lost in 2002. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has granted an extension for paying private veterinary practitioners to conduct the testing,” said Dr. Hillman.

“The beef and dairy industry partnered on a plan for regaining the USDA’s TB-free status recognition and freedom to move breeding cattle without TB tests,” he said. “A major aspect of the plan involved TB testing all Texas dairies and approximately 2,400 purebred or beef breeding herds.”

“In 2004, the dairy industry fulfilled its testing obligation. One infected dairy, in Mills County, was found and depopulated. Texas still needs about 2,000 beef herd tests, as only 458 herds have been tested so far. Of these herds, all were negative for cattle TB. Every herd test counts, as this obligation is fulfilled to assure the USDA and our trading partners of adequate disease surveillance,” he said.

“Texas and the U.S., on the other hand, are on schedule to meet the objective for testing cattle for bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or BSE,” commented Dr. Hillman. “Since June 2004, more than 180,000 cattle in the U.S. have been tested, with more than 17,000 tested in Texas. All test results have been negative. Nationally, the objective is to test as many as 268,500 cattle by December 2005, with as many as 23,000 of those in Texas. Statistically, this intensive testing will allow us to determine if BSE exists in the U.S., and if it does, at what level. After December 2005, the testing will continue, but at a lower level.”

Dr. Hillman explained that cattle targeted for BSE testing include those that fail the pre-slaughter inspection at the processing plant; cattle that can not rise or walk normally; animals that exhibit signs of a central nervous system disorder, such as stumbling; or cattle that are emaciated or injured. Cattle of any age that die of unknown causes also are being tested. “If producers have cattle on their farm or ranch that meet these criteria, they should call the USDA’s toll-free at 1-866-536-7593. Arrangements will be made to properly sample and dispose of the animal, without cost to the producer,” he noted.

“A good relationship with your private veterinary practitioner also is crucial to maintaining healthy livestock,” said Dr. Hillman. “Consult your private veterinary practitioner about having equine animals vaccinated against West Nile Virus (WNV), a “sleeping sickness” carried by birds and transmitted by infected mosquitoes.” WNV disease was first detected in the U.S. on the East Coast in 1999, and by 2002, the disease spread to Texas. Two WNV vaccines are available, and he credited vaccination and mosquito control for the decrease in Texas equine cases from nearly 1,700 in 2002, to 123 cases in 2004.

Dr. Hillman also urged owners to have equine animals vaccinated against other “sleeping sicknesses,” including Eastern and Western Equine Encephalitis (EEE and WEE). Besides controlling mosquitoes, flies and other insects, he advised owners also to maintain fresh water supplies and to clean stalls regularly to reduce breeding grounds for mosquitoes and flies.

“If you’re selling your horse, or hauling it to shows, rodeos, trail rides or other assemblies, including breeding farms or stables, remember to have the animal tested for Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) every 12 months.”

Dr. Hillman explained that there is no vaccine, treatment or cure for EIA, which is transmitted by blood-to-blood contact from infected to ‘clean’ equine animals. Biting flies are most often the culprits in the disease cycle, because horse flies and deer flies have large mouthparts and carry and transmit small amounts of blood from one animal to another. EIA prevention includes isolating or euthanizing infected horses, and controlling flies.

“While some infected horses will become very sick, others may exhibit no signs of disease, yet carry the virus and pose a danger to ‘clean’ horses,” said Dr. Hillman. To protect horses, TAHC regulations require a negative EIA test within the previous 12 months before horse are sold or hauled to events. An accredited private veterinary practitioner must draw a small blood sample from the animal. The test is then run at one of the more than 60 USDA approved laboratories in Texas.

“TAHC regulations require the EIA-infected animals to be euthanized, shipped to slaughter or a research facility, or be maintained in isolation, away from other horses,” he said. “Increased testing and strict requirements for the disposition of infected animals have paid off in reducing the number of EIA cases.” More than 259,000 equine animals in Texas were tested in 2004, and 82 infected animals were detected. This is a dramatic decrease from 1997, when 750 infected animals were found.”

“Texas experienced an outbreak of vesicular stomatitis or VS in 2004. This blistering disease, on first glance, looks like foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), a highly contagious and dangerous foreign animal disease,” commented Dr. Hillman. “Both VS and FMD cause excessive slobbering, and blisters and sores in and around an animal’s mouth, above the hooves and on teats. That’s why it is so important to have laboratory tests run to determine the cause of illness if cattle, pigs, sheep, or goats exhibit blistering. VS, unlike FMD, also will affect horses.”

“Texas’ VS outbreak was limited to 15 premises in eight counties and ended in mid-October. In Colorado, however, the outbreak has continued into the winter, with livestock quarantined on more than 100 premises in Colorado,” commented Dr. Hillman. He explained that livestock are quarantined to their premises until 30 days after all lesions on affected livestock heal, a process that takes a minimum of two or three weeks. During that time, he said affected animals should receive supportive care, to prevent infection in open sores.

“Resolve to stay alert and report unusual signs of disease or pests. This protects not only your own herd or flock, but all Texas livestock,” he said. Signs to be concerned about include widespread illness or unexpected death losses in herds or flocks. Make reports if animals develop blistering, staggering, or have unusual maggots or ticks.

“Along the Rio Grande, fever ticks have infested livestock on nearly a dozen premises outside the permanent “fever tick quarantine zone,” worrying the livestock and regulatory community. Fever ticks have the capability of carrying and transmitting the deadly blood parasite *Babesia begemina* that destroys the red blood cells of cattle. Known as ‘Texas Fever,’ this tick-borne illness of cattle was the prime impetus for the TAHC to be created in 1893 as the Livestock Sanitary Commission.”

Dr. Hillman explained that fever ticks were eradicated from the U.S. in 1943, but still are present in areas of Mexico. The narrow “permanent quarantine zone” along the Rio Grande in Texas is patrolled by about 60 USDA “tick riders” on horseback, who apprehend stray livestock crossing the Rio Grande, and inspect, dip or spray them to kill ticks. Owners can reclaim their stock for the cost of the feed bill. USDA tick riders also inspect, treat and issue permits for livestock to be moved from ranches that lie within the permanent quarantine zone, and also ensure that ticks are eradicated on infested premises.

“TAHC field personnel also are trained to collect and identify ticks, as there is always a chance that fever ticks could be carried northward, or other dangerous foreign ticks could be introduced from other parts of the world,” he said. “Tick and maggot collection kits also are available at no charge to producers, so these pests can be sent to the State-Federal Laboratory for identification.”

Dr. Hillman stressed that successful disease or pest eradication is a ‘two-step’ effort. The first step: detect and clean up an infected or infested herd or flock. The second step: track animals that have been moved from the herd or flock, to determine if they spread the disease or pest to new sites.

“Tracking livestock movement always has been the most frustrating aspect of disease eradication. In late 2004, premises identification was offered to Texas herd and flock owners, and it is the groundwork for implementing the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) in Texas,” said Dr. Hillman. The premises identification is a numerical version of an address, and so far, nearly 300 have been issued to producers and are being maintained on a confidential database. Producers are encouraged to register online at the TAHC website at <http://www.tahc.state.tx.us>. Persons without computer access should call the TAHC at 1-800-550-8242, ext. 733, for a registration form that can be completed and mailed.

Eventually, as NAIS is fully implemented, animals being moved from their farm or ranch of birth will receive an individually numbered radio frequency ear tag, implantable ID device or a group number, depending on their species, explained Dr. Hillman. When animals are moved from their herd of origin, or “home place,” their personal number will be linked to the sites where they live or are commingled with other animals, including ranches, livestock markets, other facilities, and finally, the slaughter plant. Computerized “footprints” will give animal health regulatory personnel a “head start” in tracking diseased animals and which herds or flocks may have been exposed. “Ideally, it could take minutes, instead of months, to determine where animals have been moved. And, the sooner a disease outbreak is eradicated, the sooner producers can return to normal business,” he said.

“It doesn’t matter which species or how many head of livestock or poultry you own,” said Dr. Hillman. “Resolve to keep disease out, control pests, stay alert and report unusual signs of disease. Stay in touch with your private veterinary practitioner and you’ll have met important resolutions this year, and every year. These could be your most cost-effective and beneficial livestock and flock management decisions.”

New York Funds Develop Agriculture Industries

STATE OF NEW YORK
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER
GEORGE E. PATAKI, GOVERNOR

Press Office
518-474-8418
212-681-4640
<http://www.state.ny.us>

FOR RELEASE:

IMMEDIATE, Friday

February 4, 2005

**GOVERNOR AWARDS \$455,000 FOR AGRICULTURE
INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT**

Funding Will Promote Advances in Research, Technology and Marketing to Assist Farmers and Enhance New York's Agricultural Industry.

Governor George E. Pataki today announced more than \$455,000 in State funding to 13 recipients as part of the Grow New York Food and Agriculture Industry Development (FAID) Program. The projects will support innovative approaches to the research, development, production, processing, marketing and distribution of agricultural products and food throughout New York State.

"From enhancing production capabilities, to marketing new products, New York farmers are increasingly embracing new technologies and innovative approaches that promote and strengthen their businesses and the agricultural industry in the State," Governor Pataki said. "I am proud that these grants are helping to support and encourage the growth of agribusiness in New York and ensure the future prosperity of this vitally important industry."

"We're proud of the steps we've taken to ensure that New York's farmers and family farms can continue to prosper," the Governor added. "Our programs are helping to control property taxes for farmers and promote locally grown products across the state. This year, as part of Operation SPUR, we've also proposed the creation of new Agri-Business Opportunity Zones that will help farmers by providing incentives and tax benefits to encourage new investment and increase the competitiveness of agriculture-based businesses in our rural communities across New York."

The FAID Program provides up to \$60,000 in matching funds to public and private agencies, organizations, businesses, educational institutions, local governments and individuals submitting proposals that capitalize on the State's unique resources and strategic location to maximize the economic vitality of New York agriculture.

Eligible projects involve new product development; alternative production, processing, distribution and marketing methods or technologies; the introduction of new technologies; or organizational methods that further the development of New York's food and agricultural industry. All projects should have a time frame for completion of

approximately one year or less, and should generate benefits for large numbers of producers and consumers.

State Agriculture Commissioner Nathan L. Rudgers said, "New York growers, processors must be able to compete in a marketplace with producers who are utilizing new advances in technology. Grow New York grants are helping our industry put innovative ideas to work and move their businesses forward.

Governor Pataki is a great supporter of New York agriculture, and I thank him for once again providing the strategic investment necessary to help this vital sector."

Since the programs inception in 2000, more than \$2.8 million in FAID grants have been distributed to support 94 agricultural projects across the State.

FAID is part of the Governor's Grow New York initiative, which incorporates numerous programs designed to enhance the economic vitality of agriculture in New York. Over the past three years, Grow New York has provided a total of more than \$3.3 million in competitive grants for nearly 200 agricultural projects including FAID, farmers' market improvements and farmland viability.

Since taking office, Governor Pataki has not only provided competitive grant opportunities for farmers, he has cut school property taxes for farmers up to 100 percent; slashed workers' compensation rates for farmers by more than 25 percent; strengthened agricultural district laws; introduced the Pride of New York program to promote state-grown products and helped protect more than 28,000 acres of farmland from development.

Agriculture is one of New York's largest and most vital industries, encompassing 25 percent of the State's landscape and generating more than \$3 billion for our economy each year. Currently, New York State has 7.6 million acres of farmland with 37,000 farms.

New York State is a leader in a variety of farm products, ranking first in cottage cheese, second in apples and cabbage, and third in milk, maple syrup, grapes, sweet corn, snap beans, and cauliflower.

A complete list of grant recipients is attached.

###

Grow New York FAID Program Funded Projects

Broome County Cooperative Extension \$21,239. Examine the feasibility of establishing a new niche market in livestock products grown and processed in the Southern Tier-the Southern Tier Livestock Renaissance project.

Cornell University (Ontario County) \$21,075. Conduct research on the production of premium quality cold-pressed grape seed oil from the by-product of Concord grape juice production.

Hudson Mohawk Resource Conservation & Development Council (Columbia County) \$52,000. Establish a livestock processing service company to bring producers and processors in the Hudson and Mohawk Valleys together in closer coordination with existing processors.

Long Island Horticultural Research and Extension Center (Suffolk County) \$3,581. Conduct research to compare alternative materials for control of greenhouse pests and alternatives to imidacloprid insecticide for greenhouse use in New York.

Morrisville Auxiliary Corporation (Madison County) \$60,000. Expand New York grown and processed products to New York City consumers and expand opportunities for products to be used in restaurants, delis and other venues.

Northeastern Juice Cooperative (Oswego County) \$21,500. Conduct a feasibility study for a cooperative storage facility for processing and juice apples in New York State.

NY Farms! (Tioga County) \$12,900. Create a resource guide for direct market livestock and poultry farmers through a better understanding of current meat marketing regulations to maintain sanitary standards.

Olliewood Farm (Onondaga County) \$12,000. Conduct a market feasibility study of Boer and Kiko meat goat breeds with regard to current and future markets for goat meat.

Orchard Sweets (Wayne County) \$60,000. Acquire a rotary drum dryer and milling machine and build a structure to aid in dehydration of fruit and vegetable products for the pet food industry.

Pro-Fac Cooperative, Inc. (Monroe County) \$30,000. Cultivate and establish new markets for New York chipping potatoes through expanding production opportunities for New York producers.

Queensboro Farm Products, Inc. (Madison County) \$44,494. Conduct a study of the manufacturing and packaging processes of acidified cream cheese marketed in three pound loaves.

RT Solutions (Livingston County) \$60,000. Design, build and operate a large vermicomposting (earthworm composting) facility located on, and using dairy manure from Coyne Farms Dairy.

Washington County Cooperative Extension \$56,683. Expand the Farm-to-Chef Express program through better publicity, education for farmers and chefs, farmer-chef networking, and development of a business plan.

TOTAL AWARDED: \$455,472

For more information: **Jessica A. Chittenden, Director of Communications**

NYS Dept. of Agriculture & Markets

10B Airline Drive, Albany, NY 12235

☎ 518-457-3136

NASDA-State Department of Agriculture Information

Locate your State Department of Agriculture office by clicking on the National Association of the State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) website at the following address:

<http://www2.nasda.org/NR/exeres/FAF683C2-6CFA-432C-B416-465EF9BE1267.htm>

or by clicking on <http://www2.nasda.org>

Links to State Regional Trade Groups

The State Regional Trade Groups (STRG) are four regionally located, non-profit trade development organizations that help U.S. food producers and processors sell their products overseas. The STRGs receive funds from USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS), the State Departments of Agriculture and private industry.

They carry out promotional activities that increase exports of U.S. high-value food and agricultural products. Activities of the organizations are directed by the State Departments of Agriculture, state agricultural promotion agencies, and coordinated with FAS' Washington and country offices overseas including international trade exhibitions, overseas trade missions, reverse trade missions, export education, in-country research, and point-of-sale promotions in foreign food chains and restaurants in markets around the world. The STRGs also administer a cost-share funding program called the Brand Program that supports promotion of brand name food and agricultural products in overseas markets. The STRGs include:



The Western U.S. Agricultural Trade Association (WUSATA) is located in Vancouver, Washington. <http://www.wusata.org>

Calendar of events: http://www.wusata.org/events_calendar/default.asp



The Mid-America International Agri-Trade Council (MIATCO) is based in Chicago, Illinois. <http://www.miatco.org>

Calendar of events: http://www.miatco.org/us_food/events_calendar/index.htm



The Southern U.S. Trade Association (SUSTA) is located in New Orleans, Louisiana. <http://www.susta.org>.

For the calendar of events click onto: <http://www.susta.org/events/index.html>

(MORE)



The Food Export USA-NE is located in the Northeast at:

<http://www.foodexportusa.org>

Calendar of events: <http://www.foodexportusa.org/calendar/index.cfm>

For more information on the State Regional Trade Groups click:

<http://www.fas.usda.gov/agexport/psinfo.html>



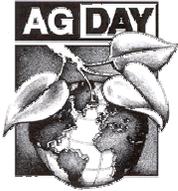
For export assistance click on USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service

at: <http://www.fas.usda.gov/agexport/exporter.html>



The U.S. Commercial Service Export Assistance link:

<http://www.export.gov>.



National Agriculture Day

A Celebration of Agriculture

March 20, 2005

Agriculture Council of America, 11020 King Street, Ste 205, Overland Park, KS 66210 • 913-491-1895 • Fax: 913-491-6502 • www.agday.org

Agriculture: From Food and Fiber to Fuel and Plastics

When most Americans think of agriculture and its end products, they probably picture a picnic table full of food or a field of waving grain or a pasture full of livestock. The reality is that today's picture is quite a bit different than the one even 10 years ago.

New uses for agricultural products are being developed at an increasingly rapid pace. Today's real picture should include not only the food on the table, but the table itself, the containers used to serve and store the food, the utensils used to eat it and the fuel in the vehicles driven to the picnic. The fence around the pasture or the lab where the grain seed was developed to give it pharmaceutical characteristics are also pictures in today's agricultural photo album – and there are many more to come.

All Americans are asked to enjoy and admire the wonders of American agriculture as National Agriculture Day is celebrated on March 20.

Researchers are refining current and developing new uses for agricultural products everyday. Ethanol is the largest industrial use of the commodity crops, but soy diesel and other uses are emerging daily. According to Doug DeVries, sr. vice president, agricultural marketing for North America, Australia and Asia at John Deere in Moline, Ill., resins from corn and soybeans are used in some of the panels that go into John Deere equipment. This is but one example of the many new uses for ag crops. "We've really just seen the tip of the iceberg in the use of renewable resources," he says. "The more we can use commodity crops in industrial applications, the better off we'll all be."

The industrial uses for agricultural products are quite extensive. Wheat straw is being used in building materials, corn and soybeans are being used as

fuels. Soybeans are also used in market segments that traditionally use petroleum products including: plastics, lubricants, coatings and ink, adhesives, and specialty markets like solvents. Corn is also used in many of those markets.

Pharmaceutical companies are actively working with farmers to develop crops that can go directly from the field to pharmaceutical production – eliminating some of the processing steps that occur in today's operations. This research will significantly reduce the costs required to produce many life-saving drugs.

Research today is focused on improving agricultural production and developing crop genetics for specific uses. This research will reduce America's dependence on petroleum-based products, increase the quality of food products that reach the retail shelf and ensure a plentiful, cost-effective food supply for years to come.

More information on advances in agriculture can be found in a variety of locations on the Internet. Some key sights include:

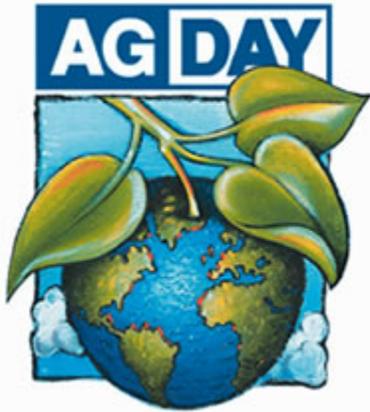
- www.ncga.com
- www.unitedsoybean.org
- www.newuses.org
- www.agday.org
- www.reeusda.gov
- www.johndeere.com
- www.whybiotech.com

These are just a few of the sites available and they contain links to other sites with specific information on the various aspects of agriculture, biotechnology and food safety.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there will be approximately 7.5 billion people in the world by the year 2020 (currently the number is 6.2 billion).

Improving the quality and quantity of food available to the world and creating additional non-food uses with renewable resources will only grow in importance to the population at large.

The people involved in agriculture today realize the vital role they play and celebrate the advances agriculture has witnessed in the last 20 years. Consumers, both farm and non-farm, marvel at the promise of new products and technologies on the horizon.



National Agriculture Day Information Website:

For more information on National Agriculture Day, click on the National Agriculture Council of America Website at:

<http://www.agday.org/>

Or Contact:

Eldon White

President

Agriculture Council of America

PH: (913) 491-1895

FX: (913) 491-6502

E-mail: info@agday.org



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Office of Communications • 1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250-1300 • Voice: (202) 720-4623 • Email: oc.news@usda.gov • Web: <http://www.usda.gov>

Release No. 0034.05

Contact:

Ed Loyd (202) 720-4623

Fred Jacobs (202) 720-6794

EMERGENCY WATERSHED PROTECTION PROGRAM FUNDING WILL HELP WASHINGTON COUNTY, UTAH

WASHINGTON, Feb. 1, 2005-Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns announced today that \$6 million will be available through the Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP) for Washington County, Utah.

"This funding will provide emergency assistance to help restore natural resources and protect property from the devastating effects of the recent flooding," Johanns said.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is providing disaster assistance information and EWP program guidance in Utah to communities, landowners, and other agencies. Interdisciplinary teams made up of NRCS resource conservationists, engineers, foresters, biologists, geologists and soil scientists currently are assessing damages, compiling data, and working with local communities that have eligible emergency recovery work in Utah.

NRCS administers EWP to help remove threats to life and property that remain in the nation's watersheds in the aftermath of natural disasters such as floods, hurricanes, tornadoes and wildfires.

The purpose of the EWP program is to undertake emergency measures to safeguard lives and property from floods, drought, and the products of erosion on any watershed whenever fire, flood or any other natural occurrence is causing or has caused a sudden impairment of the watershed.

These funds were provided through Congressional emergency supplemental appropriations and are used for such measures as debris removal, streambank stabilization, revegetation, purchase of floodplain easements and repair of water control structures and public infrastructure.

Information on EWP and the recent flood damage in Utah is on the Web at <http://www.ut.nrcs.usda.gov>.

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Washington, DC 20250-1300 • Voice: (202) 720-4623 • Email: oc.news@usda.gov • Web: <http://www.usda.gov>

Release No. 0032.05

Contact:
Ed Loyd (202) 720-4623
Mary Cressel (202) 690-0547

USDA PROVIDES UP TO \$5 MILLION IN CONSERVATION INNOVATION GRANTS FOR THE CHESAPEAKE BAY WATERSHED

WASHINGTON, Jan. 31, 2005—Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns today announced that up to \$5 million is available in fiscal year 2005 Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) for the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

"This grant competition provides farmers and ranchers the opportunity to address some of the Chesapeake watershed's most pressing natural resource conservation needs," Johanns said. "Innovative conservation technologies and approaches will help in the restoration, protection and enhancement of the bay area."

The Chesapeake Bay watershed covers more than 64,000 square miles extending over parts of six states: Delaware, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia. It is the largest estuary in the United States and has a rich diversity of productive agriculture operating in close proximity to nearly 17 million residents.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) issued a request for proposals (RFP) that is on the agency's website and the Federal eGrants website at <http://www.grants.gov>. Applicants will have 60 days to submit proposals.

CIG is offered to a variety of potential applicants, including state and local agencies, nonprofit organizations, for-profit companies, tribes and individuals, to help develop, test, implement and transfer innovative environmental solutions. Projects may be from one to three years in length and must address at least one of the CIG natural resource concerns identified annually by NRCS. Grants will fund projects targeting innovative on-the-ground conservation, including pilot projects and field demonstrations.

Selected applicants may receive grants up to 50 percent of the total project cost. Applicants must provide nonfederal matching funds for at least 50 percent of the project cost, of which up to 50 percent may be from in-kind contributions. An exception allows for beginning and limited resource farmers and ranchers, tribes and community-based organizations representing these groups to obtain up to 75 percent of project matching funds from in-kind contributions. The federal contribution may not exceed \$1 million for a single project.

This funding is in addition to the \$15 million announced on Jan. 11, 2005, for the CIG nationwide competition for fiscal year 2005.

Applicants may apply for both the nationwide and the Chesapeake Bay watershed grants, but must submit separate applications. Proposals funded by one RFP will not be funded by the other.

Additional information on CIG and the RFP are available at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/cig/>.

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NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & MARKETS
Nathan L. Rudgers, Commissioner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
CONTACT: Jessica Chittenden
518-457-3136

February 7, 2005

STATE OFFERS FREE TESTING TO HELP ERADICATE SCRAPIE
New Eradication Program Uses Genetic Testing on Rams

State Agriculture Commissioner Nathan L. Rudgers today offered free genetic testing to any sheep owner to further advance the State's ongoing efforts to eradicate the bovine disease, scrapie. The free testing is made available through the New York Ram Project, a new plan aimed at enhancing flock resistance to scrapie in New York by conducting genetic testing on rams.

"Scrapie costs American sheep producers an estimated \$25 million annually," the Commissioner said. "By knowing the genetics of their breeding animals, producers can knowingly breed more resistance to scrapie in their flock. More resistance to scrapie means healthier animals, more profitable producers and moves us a step closer to eradicating this fatal and devastating disease that has challenged our industry for so many years."

Research has shown that certain genes in the DNA of sheep play a role in the development of scrapie. A simple DNA test from a blood sample can reveal the resistance or susceptibility of sheep to scrapie. Rams have the greatest impact for the development of scrapie resistance and are therefore the focus of New York Ram Project. There is no genetic test available for goats at this time.

New York sheep producers who wish to have their rams tested should contact their local accredited veterinarian to schedule an appointment before September 15, 2005. The Department will reimburse veterinarians \$25 to cover the cost of sampling and testing.

Funding for this program is being provided by a grant from the United States Department of Agriculture's Animal Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services (USDA-APHIS-VS). Funding is limited and offered on a first come, first served basis. Testing is limited to six rams per flock. Testing must be completed by September 15, 2005.

There are two other programs available to sheep owners that address the ongoing concern for scrapie. The Scrapie Eradication Program surveys cull animals at slaughter to identify infected flocks and helps fund the clean-up of infected flocks. The Voluntary Scrapie Flock Certification Program monitors flocks over a period of time to certify flocks scrapie-free, enhancing the marketability of animals.

In New York, the Department has worked cooperatively with USDA APHIS to eradicate scrapie by issuing official identification tags to producers to use when selling animals from

their flocks and communicating with producers and veterinarians on new information regarding scrapie and associated eradication efforts.

Scrapie is a fatal, degenerative disease that affects the central nervous system of sheep and goats. It has been recognized in the world for more than 250 years and in the United States since 1947. It is among a number of diseases classified as transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSE) and caused by the ingestion of prions, infectious proteins.

The name “scrapie” was coined from sheep trying to relieve the intense itching it causes, which results in sheep “scraping” off their wool. Sheep and goats can both be infected with scrapie at a very young age, but may not show symptoms of disease until two to six years of age. Symptoms may include: weight loss, excessive itching, loss of coordination, and abnormal behavior.

In 2003, APHIS determined the prevalence of scrapie in mature U.S. cull sheep to be 0.2 percent or one positive out of 500 cull sheep. Australia and New Zealand are the only two countries in the world to be recognized as scrapie-free.

New York State has 1,700 sheep farms with an inventory of approximately 75,000 sheep and lambs and 3,000 breeding rams, with a combined value of \$9.5 million. Cash receipts from the sale of sheep and lambs in New York in 2003 totaled \$2.5 million.

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Jessica A. Chittenden

Director of Communications

NYS Dept. of Agriculture & Markets

10B Airline Drive, Albany, NY 12235

☎ 518-457-3136

USDA Reports on Consumer-Driven Changes In Global Food Supply Chains

This is a USDA-Economic Research Service report that looks at the following:

Understanding the competitive nature of the global food industry means understanding changing consumer preferences and the food industry's efforts to meet these demands. (**New Directions in Global Food Markets**, 02/01/05)

To access the report, open your web browser and click on the following link:

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/AIB794/>

Or access the report through the FAS Website at:

www.fas.usda.gov

USDA Releases Report on Changes in China's Agricultural Policies

The following is a USDA-Economic Research Service Report on:

New policies reflect China's new view of agriculture as a sector needing a helping hand. Subsidies are targeted at grain producers, but they do not provide strong incentives to increase grain production. (**China's New Farm Subsidies**; 02/04/05)

To access the report, open your web browser and click on the following link:

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/WRS0501/>

Or access the report through the FAS Website at:

www.fas.usda.gov

USDA Invites Export Applications

USDA INVITES APPLICATIONS FOR EXPORT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Donald Washington (202) 720-3101
Washington@fas.usda.gov

WASHINGTON, Feb. 13, 2001—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced that it will accept applications for four export market development programs until March 12. The programs are the fiscal year 2001 Emerging Markets Program (EMP), Market Access Program (MAP), Quality Samples Program (QSP), and the FY 2002 Foreign Market Development Program (FMD).

USDA also announced that it will accept applications for the Section 108 program on a continuing basis. Applications for Section 108 will be reviewed quarterly.

All of the programs are designed to help expand commercial export markets for U.S. agricultural commodities and are administered by USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service. Applications for participation in these programs are due by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, March 12, 2001.

The purpose of the EMP is to assist U.S. public and private organizations in improving market opportunities for U.S. agricultural products in low- to middle-income countries. The program focuses on expanding market access opportunities where there are risks that the private sector would not normally undertake alone.

Working through U.S. trade organizations and small-sized entities, the MAP is designed to create, expand, and maintain foreign markets for the U.S. agricultural commodities through cost-share assistance. MAP participants share in the cost of overseas marketing and promotion activities.

The QSP helps U.S. exporters provide samples of American commodities to foreign buyers who have not previously used them, as a means to encourage new purchases. The program supports projects that benefit whole industries rather than individual companies. When a project is finished, USDA reimburses the costs for procuring and exporting the samples.

The FMD program can provide funds to assist nonprofit U.S. agricultural trade organizations in developing and maintaining foreign markets for U.S. agricultural products through a cost-share program. FMD funds are allocated to U.S. trade organizations with the broadest possible producer representation. Priority is given to those organizations that are nationwide in membership and scope. Activities must contribute to the maintenance or growth of demand for the agricultural commodities and generally address long-term foreign import constraints and export growth opportunities.

Section 108 provides cost-share assistance in the form of foreign currencies to the private sector for the development, maintenance, and expansion of long-term export markets for U.S. agricultural products and agricultural technical assistance in foreign countries.

Applicants are encouraged to apply through the Internet. To do so, contact the FAS Marketing Operations Staff by calling (202) 720-4327 for a log-on ID and a password. The web-based application is located on the Internet at <http://www.fas.usda.gov/mos/ues/unified.html>

Applicants can also submit a single application for all of the export assistance programs, including the MAP and FMD, under the Unified Export Strategy (UES). Using UES, constituents can consolidate their market development proposals into one strategically coordinated proposal for all of the programs.

Applications can be **hand-delivered to:** USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service, Marketing Operations Staff, Room 4932-S, 1400 Independence Ave. S.W., Washington, DC 20250-1042; **mailed to:**

USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service, Marketing Operations Staff, Stop 1042, 1400 Independence Ave. S.W., Washington, DC 20250-1042; or **sent electronically to:** mosadmin@fas.usda.gov.

*#General information about FAS programs, resources, and services is available on the Internet.
The address (URL) for the FAS home page is: <http://www.fas.usda.gov>*

PR 0050-01

MITACO Trade Mission to Chile

4/10/2005
to
4/14/2005

[Mercosur Trade Mission](#)

MIATCO and Food Export USA will be hosting a trade mission to Chile that will focus on the retail industry. Participants will receive an import analysis, attend seminars, meet with pre-qualified buyers and importers and more!

Santiago, Chile

For More Information, Contact:

Liz Urban
MIATCO
Chicago, IL
Phone: 1.312.334.9217
Fax: 1.312.334.9230
E-mail: lurban@miatco.org

5/21/2005
to
5/23/2005

[Foodservice Buyers Mission](#)

In conjunction with the May 2005 NRA show, MIATCO and Food Export USA will be bringing in a delegation of foodservice buyers from Asia and Latin America to meet with U.S. foodservice suppliers.

Chicago, IL

[Foodservice Buyers Mission](#)

5/21/2005 to 5/23/2005

Type of event: Buyers Mission
Event location: Chicago, IL
Product focus: Food & Beverage
Registration deadline:

For More Information, Contact:

Liz Urban
MIATCO
Chicago, IL
Phone: 1.312.334.9217
Fax: 1.312.334.9230
E-mail: lurban@miatco.org

For Additional Shows and Trade Mission, click on the following MIATCO website at:

http://www.miatco.org/us_food/

And look under the events Calendar.



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Release No. 0044.05

Contact:

Ed Loyd (202) 720-4623

Mary Cressel (202) 690-0547

USDA AWARDS MORE THAN \$22 MILLION IN ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM FUNDS TO 17 STATES

WASHINGTON, Feb. 9, 2005-Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns today announced that \$22.2 million in Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) funds would be provided to 17 states for their high levels of performance in implementing the program during 2004.

"These funds will help farmers and ranchers improve soil, air and water resources on private working lands," Johanns said. "These awards recognize states that have achieved the greatest efficiency in delivering technical and financial assistance to agricultural producers. This program also helps producers comply with federal, state and local environmental regulations."

The states receiving the performance award are Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Idaho, Louisiana, Maine, Mississippi, Montana, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, Washington and Wyoming.

EQIP is a voluntary conservation program for farmers and ranchers that promotes agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible national goals. EQIP offers financial and technical help to assist eligible participants implement structural and management practices on eligible agricultural land.

The program provides a performance incentive to optimize the overall environmental benefits of EQIP. In awarding the incentive, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service considered factors such as efficiency in providing technical assistance for conservation system applications, strategic planning and program implementation, degree of emphasis on funding comprehensive nutrient management plans with livestock producers, use of technical service providers, and contracts with limited resource farmers and ranchers.

Funding allocated per state:

State	Funding
Alabama	\$1,461,988
Arkansas	\$1,461,988
Georgia	\$1,169,591
Idaho	\$1,461,988

Louisiana	\$1,461,988
Maine	\$1,315,789
Mississippi	\$1,315,789
Montana	\$1,315,789
New Mexico	\$1,169,591
North Dakota	\$1,169,591
Ohio	\$1,315,789
Oklahoma	\$1,461,988
South Carolina	\$1,315,789
Texas	\$1,169,591
Utah	\$1,315,789
Washington	\$1,169,591
Wyoming	\$1,169,591
Total	\$22,222,220

Additional information on EQIP can be found at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip>.

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FAS Trade Show Calendar Information

To access the FAS Trade Show Calendar, open your web browser and click on the following link:

<http://www.fas.usda.gov/agexport/shows/TradeShowCalendar05-06.pdf>

Or access the FAS Website at: www.fas.usda.gov

Under "Calendar of Events" at the bottom of the Home Page,
click on the "2004-2005 Trade Show" calendar.

USDA AG Calendar of Events

**For information on the latest calendar of events through USDA's
Agricultural Library, open your web browser and click on the
following:**

<http://www.nal.usda.gov/calendar/>

World Trade Centers Association:

Find out about upcoming events at World Trade Centers around the globe! The World Trade Center Association has a Calendar of Events that is loaded with seminars, conferences, trade fairs, exhibitions and other events for the international business community. For more information, click on the following link:

<http://world.wtca.org/portal/index.jsp>

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TAPO Mailbox

Many of the questions for the Trade Assistance and Promotion Office (TAPO) are how to get started about investigating general export options. Luckily for them, FAS has a step-by-step, easy to follow process on the website, www.fas.usda.gov/. At the top of the page, select EXPORTER ASSISTANCE and get this page:

[Are You Ready To Export?](#)

Determine if exporting is right for you and identify your strengths and weaknesses for developing an export strategy, by completing this interactive on-line questionnaire.

[Create an Export Plan](#)

Learn how to achieve export success by formulating an export strategy based on solid information and sound assessments.

[Researching and Identifying Your Market](#)

Learn how to conduct your market research by classifying your product, using market and analysis reports to evaluate international demand and develop competitive pricing strategies.

[U.S. Export and Foreign Country Import Requirements and Certifications](#)

Find out how to identify and complete the documents needed to export, plant, animals, and food.

[Shipping Your Exports](#)

Get help in selecting transportation, choosing a freight forwarder and finding out about market conditions.

[Channels of Distribution](#)

Determine import procedures, learn marketing information and make useful contacts to help get your product into an overseas market.

[Financing Your Exports](#)

Find out about the programs offered by FAS and other government agencies that can help you finance the marketing and distribution of your agricultural products abroad.

[Finding Customers and Representatives for Your Product](#)

Pinpoint potential buyers, sales and promotional opportunities abroad by using FAS services (Trade Leads, Buyer Alerts, Foreign Buyer Listings, U.S. Suppliers Listings, AgTrade Opportunities and Trade Shows).

[Exporter Guides, Web References and Map of Local Contacts](#)

Need further information on exporting your product? National, state and regional sources offer trade assistance.

[Agricultural Trade Links](#)

[Exporter's Matrix: Handbook for U.S. Agribusinesses \(.pdf\)](#)

Lists essential export programs and contact phone numbers in USDA, the U.S. Department of Commerce and state regional trade associations.

With a little research, producers/manufacturers can determine if exporting is right for their business. Once they start their research, they are encouraged to contact TAPO with any specific questions/problems they might have. TAPO@fas.usda.gov or 202-720-7420

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